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## STANLEY'S GOOD ROAD POLICY.

Louisville.—Address of Governor A. Owsley Stanley before the Kentucky Good Roads Association, on September 15, 1915.

Ladies and Gentlemen: I am deeply grateful to my good friend, Bob McBryde, for his very kind reference to me. We should all be grateful to him for his years of tireless, patient and unrequited toil in behalf of this great movement, without expecting, without receiving, any other recompense than the gratitude of his countrymen and the welfare of his country. With tongue and pen he has presented with marked ability every reason which can be assigned for this great work, and he has answered every objection which the ignorant or penurious might advance. The people of Kentucky have yet to learn the debt they owe this great journalist for a great work nobly done.

I am not here today to attempt to entertain you with anything that approaches a formal address. I am not here to make a speech; if I am elected Governor of Kentucky, my time will not be given to saying things, but to doing them. (Applause) This is in its essence a matter of business as well as sentiment, and to the fiscal side of this problem I shall in the main address my few remarks.

You cannot build roads, however advisable it may be, without money. To say that you are in favor of good roads is like saying you are in favor of good health, or good morals, good atmosphere, good looks, or good anything else. Nobody not a driving fool favors good roads just as he favors good health, or good weather. We all favor good roads who have sense enough to travel over them. The question is, not whether it is desirable to have better highways in Kentucky, but how we shall obtain them. We all want them if we can afford them, because we must buy and pay for these roads ourselves. We will receive some aid from the Federal Government, but the Federal Government and the State Government alike tax the people for the money, so at least every dollar that is put in good roads comes directly or indirectly out of the pockets of the people who enjoy them. Then the question to which an intelligent citizenship should first address itself is, not shall we donate, but should we invest the money toward this good work? If you go out to get money to build good roads on the same principle that you go to get money to educate the Chinese, or save the heathen, you will not build many miles of road. To get this money, you must in a way, take it from the people, with their consent, by taxation. But the people are not going to tax themselves to build the roads unless they are convinced that it is a good investment. And whenever the people find that they are making money by expending money upon the roads you will get the money just as quickly as you would secure it from a farmer who has convinced that he would make money by buying an addition of 1,000 acres to his farm, that is for sale nearby. There is no trouble to induce men to spend money where they are certain or reasonably certain of a safe return. How is the expenditure of many thousands of dollars for good roads a safe investment?

### Money and Results.

I am separating it from its moral and aesthetic, its sentimental side. I am talking to you about the propriety of expending money for roads as I would talk to a farmer about the spending of money for land. As I would talk to the manufacturer of the propriety of spending money for machinery. As I would talk to the mine owner for spending money for a tippie, or an option upon so many acres of coal land. A great mistake that farmers have made is in not making a business-like calculation as to the cost of production, which bears a direct relation to the advisability of constructing good roads. A short time ago Charles L. Schwab, former president of the United States Steel Corporation and now president of the Bethlehem corporation, the most gifted of all the great industrial masters of finance, made this startling statement: "One-third of the cost of the production of all steel products is the cause of transportation," and one of the secrets of Schwab's phenomenal success was that he never calculated the cost of anything made of steel from a needle to a thousand tons of armor plates, that he did not calculate the cost of laying it down F. O. B. to the consignee. The farmer does not calculate. He calculates the cost of the production in a rough way, by taking cost of the land, taxes, labor, and tools. When he calculated what it cost him to get in fifty bushels of wheat on his wagon or a thousand bushels of corn in his bin completes his calculation. But he has not estimated the cost of that article to its entirety, for no man comes to his bin for corn or to the thrasher for his grain. Until he has calculated the cost of transportation he has not made an accurate estimate of the cost of production. What is the actual value of a free public highway? Let us

see—four good horses and a wagon for example with four horses at \$150 apiece, \$600; the cost of shoeing and harness is to be considered, the whole will cost not less than \$1,000, adding in the cost of maintaining these horses at \$8.00 a month is \$960 a year and you have to add that to the original cost. In six years your thousand and horses and wagon is gone, as they will be worn out. The maintenance will cost you not less than \$600 a year—\$2.00 per day. We may say that the same team will do double the work over a macadam road as they will do over a dirt road. So that the farmer in the item of four horse team, wagon and driver saves at least one dollar per day by the use of macadam road. When the farmers have calculated the saving of one item of transportation, the taking of their products to the market, leaving out the pleasure of traveling over the macadam roads to himself and to his family, leaving out the advantages to the children in attending school, and his family attending church, leaving out the features of bringing him closer to the market or to the mill on the basis of dollars and cents, there is no better investment to the producer than in the making of a cheap and convenient means of bringing the farmers' commodities to the market.

But let us take a broader and higher view. Every man who casts his ballot in the hope of receiving some pecuniary or personal benefit, either in emoluments of office or some pecuniary advantage is a menace. By that I mean that the man who votes simply to keep up some political organization, the man who votes at the call of a boss, the man who votes for money in hand is a menace to the liberty of a free people.

This government rests upon the disinterested devotion to high ideals of citizenship. It is the foundation upon which the republic rests because a majority absolutely rules in this country. And whenever that majority ceases to be honest this government will topple like a house of cards.

What has preserved this government for a hundred and fifty years or more? I will tell you: The simple citizen seated in a cane bottom chair on a rag carpet before an open fireplace, with a Bible on his knees and his family grouped about him, his head bowed simply and reverently asking God to guide him through the night, and arising in the fear of that same God at dawn to take up the simple tasks of the day. He votes of no thought of profit to himself, but for the good of his family and the honor of his country and the glory of his God. This is the power upon which this republic rests and must forever rest.

Now we talk about this simple life, its high ideals, and its noble purposes, and yet there is in Kentucky a continual exodus from the country to the town. I make no warfare upon the city. I have lived in towns the most of my life, but what I mean to say, that what we need is more good people on the farms in the country. It will cheapen the costs of living in town. It will bring more customers, and new life and new capital to our great cities.

It is an invincible instinct for men to seek the society of their fellows, to gather as we have gathered here today in great multitudes. It is as natural as for partridges to gather in coveys in the field, or birds in flocks in the sky. It is essential to the happiness, the mental and moral welfare of mankind, just so much as food or clothing. The thing that has destroyed rural life, the thing that has depopulated fertile lands is the loneliness and isolation of life in the country. Our girls and boys who live in rural districts are literally marooned in the winter without access to the postoffice, the church or the school, or to the store for the bare necessities of life in any other way than on a mule, belly deep in the mire. Our



GOVERNOR A. O. STANLEY  
OF Kentucky.

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boys and girls simply will not be kept in the rural districts ten miles from any town under such conditions. However much you may talk about the life of the country, it is too often the most lonesome existence on earth. If you wish to live in the country and bring up your family around you, if you wish them blessed by the things which are good and sweet in rural life, then you must give them the pleasant things of life in the city.

Build good roads to the city, you will lose none of the seclusion and quietness of the country. The sunshine and dew and the landscape are still there, the fertile fields and the grazing herds, and the scent of new mown hay, and the silent benediction of the evening are still yours. With good roads and automobiles—if you cannot get an automobile, borrow a Ford—the wife and her boys and girls can go to church, they can go to the fair, they can go to places of amusement, they have the advantage of the pleasures of the city, and you have not been deprived of your country home or anything that makes it desirable or lovely. You will never solve the question of "back to the country" until you have made the country more attractive. You cannot keep your family in the country with ten or twenty miles of impassable dirt roads between them and things they want for their month in the year.

### Increase in Prosperity.

The country will be happier, more thickly inhabited if the roads were improved, and the city will finally increase in prosperity whenever it unites the two by macadam roads.

Both political parties—I am not here to talk politics—have condemned the contract labor system; both parties have told you that they are in favor of employing convicts upon the roads. Now the counties have the right to employ whom they please with the money they raise themselves, and it is a vexed question to what extent where the state can force the county labor upon the county, coming as it must, more or less, in competition with free labor. In Williamson county, especially, we have an unlimited deposit of rock asphalt, a material that will cover your macadam roads with waterproofing a thousand times more indestructible than oil, a substance, hard, yet elastic, that is as enduring as marble. And yet this vast and priceless deposit today is regarded only by dirt roads that are almost impassable. This is a disgrace to Kentucky. I would see, and I hope to see, the labor of convicts, as well as others, employed in the development of these great quarries. I hope to see this, the greatest road-making material ever known, spread over several thousand miles of boulevard all over Kentucky from the mountains to the Point.

I could talk to you for a week upon this subject. Oh, it means so much to Kentucky as a state. There is so much to expect from the development of good roads. No other state in the union has such a variety and a wealth of undeveloped resources, more than Pennsylvania; more hardwood than any other commonwealth between the Mississippi and the Pacific, and more acres of fertile soil than any other state of like area between the two oceans. Our soil produces a greater variety of products than any other on this earth. Why is it that the wealth of the mountain and the wealth of the plain are not developed? It is because the people of the mountains cannot reach the wealth of the plains, and the people of the plains cannot avail themselves of the wealth of the mountains because of the cost of getting from one to the other.

This is eliminated by connecting them by great highways. It will increase the fertility of the soil and the richness of the mines and the vast wealth of the forests.

Upon this great movement rests the happiness and the prosperity of the greatest people on earth, the people who live and expect to die in old Kentucky. God bless her.



A Road in Henry County, Kentucky,  
Before Reconstruction.



Reconstructed water bound macadam road in Nicholas County. This road was impassable during the winter of 1914-15.

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